

VZCZCXRO1755
RR RUEHDA
DE RUEHDA #0001/01 0081114
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 081114Z JAN 07
FM AMCONSUL ADANA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4404
INFO RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 1006
RUEUITH/AFOSI DET 521 ANKARA TU
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 0950
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 0818
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ADANA 000001

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINS](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR DECEMBER 27, 2006

¶1. This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for December 27, 2006. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL

¶2. CUMHURIYET / TOPLUMSAL DEMOKRASI: A Turkish-based radical group called Hezbollah, which dissolved after its leader was killed six years ago in Istanbul, has reportedly been striving to regain strength in southeastern Turkey, especially in Diyarbakir province. Hezbollah is trying to regroup in many districts, villages and townships through foundations and associations. The group's current political goals reportedly focus on winning independent seats for its members in the Turkish Parliament and on winning mayoral posts in some townships in local elections. (Note: There are no known ties between this group and Iranian-based Hezbollah. End Note.)

¶3. TOPLUMSAL DEMOKRASI: The University of British Columbia-based Human Security Center released a 150-page report on Human Security worldwide. The report described the Kurdish problem as one for which "there was no effort of a negotiated settlement." Turkey is not addressing the general Kurdish issue, but is instead simply combating the security liability caused by the PKK, according to the report.

¶4. TOPLUMSAL DEMOKRASI: Ahmet Turk, the National Chairperson of the DTP, and Aysel Tugluk, Vice-Chairperson, will attend a series of activities that seek to find ways to convert the cease-fire process into a state of permanent peace in the Batman and Tunceli provinces. Turk and Tugluk have already held similar events, in which they met with thousands of people, in Hakkari, Agri, and Van provinces.

¶5. HURRIYET: The daily reported DTP Chairman Ahmet Turk as saying that if Turkey were to employ democratic and civilian methods in finding a solution to the Kurdish issue, the DTP would then call on the PKK to either sweep the mines it had laid or to indicate where it planted them. Turk added that if the Government were to send the message that it wanted to resolve the Kurdish issue through non-violent methods, then it would be able to deal with the issue more effectively.

¶6. BOLGE / EVRENSEL: A hundred members of the Labor Platform held a march in Adana to demand a larger minimum wage increase. The group chanted slogans as it marched towards the AKP's provincial party building.

¶7. TOPLUMSAL DEMOKRASI: A Diyarbakir court continued its hearing of the case opened against Diyarbakir Mayor Osman Baydemir as a result of remarks he had made "to calm the unrest" that had erupted between March 28 and 31 in Diyarbakir and had resulted in the death of 10 people. The Mayor reportedly faces

up to ten years of imprisonment. The Diyarbakir Governor's Office reportedly stated that Baydemir had requested permission from the Governor's Office to attempt to calm down the instigators. The Office had also assigned a Deputy Governor to work with Baydemir on restoring the peace.

¶18. SABAH: Sabah daily reported that the Diyarbakir Governor's Office denied assigning any responsibilities to Mayor Baydemir during the incidents that took place last March in Diyarbakir.

CRIME / LAW ENFORCEMENT:

¶19. RADIKAL / HURRIYET: In Diyarbakir a 16-year-old boy, who found his 18-year-old sister talking to her boyfriend on her cell phone at 3 AM, shot and killed her. The boy confessed to the murder and was arrested by police.

¶10. HURRIYET: Customs officials at the port of Mersin discovered contraband cigars worth 150,000 YTL (approximately 100,000 USD) in a truck aboard a vessel loaded with oranges that had come from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

¶11. HURRIYET: Three men, who deserted from the PKK and were briefly afforded shelter by peshmergas of the Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party, were returned to Turkey, reportedly upon their own request. The Sirnak Governor's Office announced that the men had been arrested at the Habur Border Gate in Sirnak. In another PKK-related story, hackers who had been caught and arrested on charges of conducting propaganda for the PKK by hacking websites, had allegedly hacked a total of 2,307 public and private websites before being apprehended.

CULTURE / SOCIETY / ENVIRONMENT

ADANA 00000001 002 OF 002

¶12. SABAH: A 13-year-old girl in Van's Baskale district, whose uncles had attempted to marry her to a 40-year-old man after her parents died, was put under state protection by the Van Governor's Office.

¶13. SABAH (GUNEY): State Minister Kursat Tuzmen attended the groundbreaking ceremony for a monument that would be erected in memory of the 14 children who were massacred by French forces during the clashes that took place in Gaziantep as the city was fighting to liberate itself from French occupation in 1920s.

¶14. HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): The Dean of the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture at Mustafa Kemal University in Hatay stated that Iskenderun Bay well-protected for tourism and fishing purposes. He added that the government had become indifferent to the issues emerging in and around the Bay.

¶15. HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): Gaziantep Mayor Asim Guzelbey said that Gaziantep province ranked second among Turkey's most heavily-indebted municipalities. Guzelbey, who noted that earlier administrations had made unplanned and lavish expenditures, added that the municipality had won its international arbitration court case, which would result in seven trillion (approx USD 5 million) Turkish Liras being repaid to the Gaziantep Municipality.

¶16. HURRIYET (CUKUROVA) / BOLGE / EKSPRES: The Yeni Adana daily celebrated its 89th birthday yesterday in Adana. Many journalists, executives, and other distinguished guests attended the event.

¶17. HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): In Gaziantep, two people claiming to be the police chief and his deputy defrauded tradesmen of their money. Police apprehended the two offenders.

¶18. RADIKAL / ZAMAN / SABAH (GUNEY) / TOPLUMSAL DEMOKRASI: Heavy snowfall has been adversely affecting daily life in Diyarbakir, Bingol, Mardin and Batman provinces. The roads to villages were blockaded with snow, and schools in Diyarbakir's

Silvan district were closed for a day due to the heavy snow.

¶19. TOPLUMSAL DEMOKRASI: According to this daily, an anonymous official from Regional Directorate of Environment and Forests allegedly admitted that the Idil Jandarma Command had requested permission from the Directorate to cut down trees in some sections of the district due to security concerns in the area (see press summary for December 26). Soldiers had, however, started cutting down trees in many places prior to official permission being given by the Directorate. The official further acknowledged that these activities had occurred not only in Sirnak's Idil district, but in the Guclukonak and Uludere districts as well.

¶20. TOPLUMSAL DEMOKRASI: A delegation, including DTP's Idil District Chairperson and the mayor of Idil, paid a visit to the Syriac Church in Sirnak to Christmas greetings.

¶21. CUMHURİYET: A controversial Turkish-US joint venture entitled the "Blackhawk Security Company" announced recently that it was halting its operations in Sirnak's Silopi district due to financial concerns.

REID